

# THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

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## NEW PROGRAMS IN LANGUAGE

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Seattle: Edna Sterling

## TEACHING BROTHERHOOD IN MANHATTAN

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AND ARTICLES BY  
DOROTHY SHEPARD MANLEY  
AND MARY LU HARVEY

"HOW  
GOOD  
ARE THE  
COMIC  
BOOKS?"

# The Elementary English Review

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# THE ELEMENTARY ENGLISH REVIEW

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## A Good Start In School

RUTH G. STRICKLAND<sup>1</sup>

A handbook for kindergarten and primary teachers, "A Good Start in School," is being made available to the schools of Indiana this spring to help teachers meet the needs of young children during their early years in school. It sets forth no prescription, no work to be covered, no specific details of method, and it can be used with any textbooks which the teacher may choose or may be required to use. The handbook presents a philosophy of education, an approach to children, and guidance in selecting and providing educative experiences which will develop physically sound, emotionally well-balanced, and intellectually and socially capable children. It presents nothing new in method or thought in the field of childhood education. It represents an earnest attempt on the part of the state to make available to all teachers and administrators, those who read widely in the literature of education and those who do not, a word and photographic picture of the development of young children in good schools and to do it in compact and readable form.

In the early stages of the construction of the handbook an outline was presented to all elementary supervisors in the state and a

group of county superintendents with the suggestion that they study it with their teachers and send to the committee criticism, comments, and suggestions as well as photographs and material to be utilized in building the chapters. One city supervisor used the outline for discussions in a series of meetings and committees of teachers in charge of the meetings sent in their notes and reports. The principal of a large school worked through the entire outline with her teachers and sent material for every section. Quantities of suggestions and material poured in as well as invitations to committee members to visit schools to see work in progress in the classrooms.

Four summer conferences were held on university and teachers college campuses, one during the first summer and three in various parts of the state during the second summer. All county and city superintendents were asked by the State Department of Public In-

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor in the School of Education, Indiana University. Chairman of the committee which produced *A Good Start in School*, a curriculum handbook for kindergarten and primary teachers in Indiana. Other members of the state committee were Mary D. Reed, Indiana State Teachers College, Terre Haute, Indiana, and Anna Pauline Lanterbur, Ball State Teachers College, Muncie, Indiana.

struction to send representatives to one or more of the conferences. As a result of the cooperation of many people the committee is convinced that the handbook represents good practice as it is found in many places in the state. In order to present the material in a uniform style the final writing was done by the committee chairman.

### *Underlying Point of View*

Education of young children must of necessity start with the children themselves, not with courses of study and textbooks. Each child who enters school is different from all other children because he is the product of a unique combination of genes bearing different hereditary patterns and because he has been shaped by the interaction of his innate tendencies with his environment. Some of these environmental interactions have been planned for him, some have been incidental or accidental. The sum total of the interactions has made of him a unique being; like others in some ways, differing from others in many ways. Each child brings in kindergarten or first grade the ten to seventeen year period of educational experience which society has provided to educate its children for democratic living.

Individuals who differ widely in the background which they bring to school may differ even more widely in the development which they attain during the years of school attendance even though school experience provides in some of its aspects a leveling and unifying influence. Some individuals go through school with a well-founded sense of security, a wholesome appreciation of their own worth, a sense of adequacy to each new task and experience, a realization that a part of the responsibility for happy living rests with them, while other individuals attend school from first grade to legal leaving age or even through college insecure, unstable, and mani-

festing various types of inabilities and inadequacies. Some young people are forever reaching out for more and more of knowledge and understanding while others, as they grow older, appear to lack any zest for learning and approach problems handicapped by closed minds. Some, on leaving school, assume their share of responsibility for the work of the world and the solving of society's problems while others dodge responsibility, sink into lethargy, or become actively anti-social.

"It is the responsibility of schools through their curriculum program to raise all children to the highest possible level of thinking, feeling, and acting and to prevent the development of those traits which are detrimental to the welfare of a democracy. Opportunity for each child to become the best, noblest, finest person he can become is the very essence of democracy."<sup>2</sup>

"Kindergarten for five-year-olds, first grade for six-year-olds—this has become the pattern in our schools. Children in kindergarten and first grade are more nearly alike in age than children in the later grades after 'failure' and retardation have taken their toll both of years and of developmental values. Children of each age level have some characteristics in common but growth and development are often uneven. A child may be a six-year-old in some respects, a seven-year-old in others, and a four or five-year-old in others. In order to understand a child in the primary grades, it is necessary to know the general characteristics of children throughout this age span."

A chapter of the handbook gives a detailed sketch of the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development of children from five through eight years of age and suggestions for studying the behavior and needs of children. In this chapter, learning is conceived of as an

<sup>2</sup>All quotations are from the volume, *A Good Start in School*, now being printed by Indiana State Department of Public Instruction.



activity which takes place under conditions which stimulate and utilize it. Young children learn through doing, through hearing adults talk, and through interpretation of both types of experience. Each child learns at his own rate and it is impossible to force him to do otherwise. Some children require more time to learn and more experience at each stage of learning than do others. This may be a difference in rate of developing and maturing rather than a difference in ability to learn. Principles of desirable teaching and learning are set up and points to consider in selecting educative experiences.

The environment in which learning takes place is an important part of curriculum when curriculum is conceived of as the sum total of each child's learning experience in the school and under its guidance. Each individual in a school—principal, teacher, nurse, custodian—is both a curriculum maker and is himself a part of the curriculum. The community with its patterns of thinking and living, the school building and equipment, the classroom with its workshop atmosphere and colorful attractive appearance, the relationships between the individuals who live in the classroom, and the interaction with other grades and groups are part of curriculum also.

The organization of the life within the classroom is also considered. There are suggestions for the daily schedule; for the period before school in the morning; the independent work period, self-directive work which the child carries on while the teacher is helping another group; the physical and mental health and safety of the child, and the school lunch period. All opportunities for communication and interaction are treated as integral parts of the curriculum.

### *The Language Arts*

The language arts are treated in a separate chapter, though it is assumed throughout the

book that they form a large part of the warp and woof of every pattern of experience. Two major functions of the language arts are considered. Communication is the social aspect of language and it includes oral and written expression together with spelling and writing which are essential tools. Reading and listening, on the other hand, are the methods by which one enriches himself and adds to his store of knowledge. It is recognized that the language arts are a single pattern of inter-related skills and abilities, closely related to experience, and that the ease with which a child masters them and his facility in the use of them have direct influence upon personality development and behavior as well as upon later social and economic efficiency.

"Oral language is the child's first need in school. Unless he can understand and speak there is little he can learn or do. Without speech and its revelation of the child's understanding and needs the teacher is seriously handicapped in her efforts to guide and teach. The authoritarian type of teacher who does most of the talking herself while she demands silence and obedience from the children fails to realize that in so doing she is blocking the most important avenue of growth and learning."

Every primary teacher should know and understand the language development that takes place during the pre-school years. During this period vocabulary growth is rapid and the child absorbs the pattern of speech which he hears about him. Kindergarten represents the first weaning from home for some children, for a few it comes in nursery school, but for many it comes in first grade. If the child has not attended kindergarten or nursery school some of the steps in language development which can properly belong to the pre-school level must take place in first grade. It is impossible to ignore these early steps or circumvent them without damage to many

children which will appear later in the form of difficulties and disabilities in reading and other aspects of language development.

The kindergarten and first grade provide many opportunities for free, informal group conversation about individual and shared experiences. There are times for showing things brought from home and talking about them; discussing work and play interests in the classroom, excursions, and problems of behavior and responsibility. Many activities call for planning, outlining of possibilities and responsibilities, and evaluation of work done. There is always time to listen to and discuss books, stories, and poems. Some of these will appeal to the child's imagination or his enjoyment of words and rhyme while others will strike a responsive chord because of association with his own experiences and interests. "Spontaneous discussion is important because it is the respect paid to the child's response that builds his confidence in his thoughts and their expression. Respect for his response also deepens his awareness of the response of others and his consideration for their thinking."

Dramatic play is the special delight of young children and a highly socializing activity for them. Such play is valuable to the teacher because it reveals aptitude and understandings as well as limitations of background and ability in expression. It loosens up the shy child and draws him into social contacts, builds his confidence and motivates his interest to the point of self-forgetfulness. It develops leadership, ability to cooperate, lends importance to details of organization and use of materials, deepens interest in stories, and all forms of vicarious experience, as well as clarifies thinking and increases knowledge and understanding. "Inherent in such play are the beginnings of many of the skills which develop during the elementary school years, quantitative thinking, mapping (the repro-

duction of life conditions on a smaller scale) utilization of oral language and sometimes written language through signs and dictated reports."

"A child's speech is frequently colorful and unconventional. His imaginative stories and other creative responses should be encouraged and fostered as expression of—his own unique personality. Most of his expression is of passing interest. The value lies mainly in the growth of the child, his confidence in his ideas and his awareness of his power, not in the poem or story he has created. Sometimes children enjoy dictating stories for the teacher to write. The child who sees his own ideas and words take form in symbols on a page has a deepened sense of what printed material is and an awakening desire to read it for himself. Creative expression springs from fullness of experience and interest and is sometimes stimulated by the thing a child is doing or the material he is using. Sometimes it springs from interest in words themselves, in their colorfulness, sound or the pleasure the child finds in manipulating them."

Children of early school age are absorbing language conventions, forms of courtesy and response. The teacher's aim is not to superimpose forms of courtesy as a veneer but gradually to weave them into the fabric of a child's response so that they spring spontaneously from the genuine consideration for others which is basic to all real courtesy.

Improvement in articulation and pronunciation are the responsibility of the child's first teachers. Simple forms of infantile speech can be corrected by the teacher, but defects requiring more technical treatment should be referred to a speech specialist for diagnosis. Developing in the child an awareness of good speech and ample experience in using speech as a tool in carrying on the life of the classroom is within the power of every teacher.

"Language is not an academic subject but a constantly used medium which can be enlarged and refined on the child's level only through listening, understanding, and talking. So much of the child's learning is dependent upon language that without some command of this tool it would be very difficult for the teacher to guide him or for him to learn. It follows logically that the utilization of language continuously and under all sorts and kinds of circumstances is of the utmost importance to growth and learning. The teacher must of necessity take each child where he is, learn from his use of language and his response to language the level of development he has reached, his points of strength, and weakness, then meet his needs through the utilization of carefully planned combinations of language and experience.

"The language needs of a first grade child and a kindergarten child are the same though the level of development may be different—the mere fact that a child is a year older does not eliminate the need for these opportunities for language development but rather makes it imperative that this growth be attained before any attempt is made to teach him the symbol form of language. Many children who have difficulty in learning to read are handicapped by lack of facility in the use of oral language."

Special effort is necessary in the primary grades to build and enlarge the child's speaking and understanding vocabulary. This calls for a rich program of social studies and science interests and many and varied activities. The reading of the primary grades deals almost entirely with words in the child's speaking and understanding vocabulary when he enters first grade. If the child is forcibly placed on a language-learning plateau because of what Dr. Paul Witty has called "curricular aridity" in the primary grades he will find reading difficult beyond the primary grades because of

his lack of a wide fund of word meanings. Drawing new words out of experiences, discussing them, recording and filing them in a growing list of new words is one good method of stimulating interest in increasing vocabulary. Ultimately, the child must assume a major share of the responsibility for enlarging his vocabulary and the earlier such an interest can be aroused the greater the gain.

The acquisition of standard form in writing compositions of various sorts is a matter which should be cared for as need arises. It is not only necessary to teach children correct forms to write but also when to use those forms. "Many people learn how to write letters without learning when to write them. Children can begin very early to learn when to write for permission, when to send a note of appreciation, sympathy, or congratulation, when to send an invitation and how to answer one. Standards for children's writing should follow the common sense practice of adults. When an adult has occasion to write a report he jots down his ideas, writes a first draft, and when he is satisfied with the content and expression he writes it in correct form. Children should be taught to work first for ideas and content, then go over their material for form, and finally to make a perfect copy if the use to which the material is to be put demands it. Corrections should be made by the teacher and pupil together."

The child's first systematic experience with language in its symbol form comes in learning to read. Reading precedes writing and spelling because it is easier to learn to recognize than to learn to reproduce. The recognition of symbol patterns which one does in reading utilizes symbols in meaningful groups and attention is centered in meaning. Writing and spelling involve manipulation of abstract symbols to create meaningful patterns, which is a far more difficult task for a beginner.

Reading readiness is an important concern of all teachers regardless of the grade level at which they teach. "Just as it is true that a little child may fail to learn to read because of lack of readiness for language in its symbol form, so a fifth grade child may fail to get meaning from a story of the middle ages for lack of the background and vocabulary that would make the story come to life, a college student may fail in a science course because he does not know how to study that science, or a mature adult may lay aside a book on economics for lack of readiness to understand it. Good teaching at any grade level demands constant building of readiness for each new type of reading experience." There is an extended discussion in the handbook of methods of building various aspects of readiness to learn to read, including experience in enjoying books and stories, dictating stories for the teacher to write, and early chart work.

The emphasis in the discussion of early work with books is upon meeting the needs of individual children. This applies to books chosen, methods of teaching, points of emphasis, and goals to be attained. The main emphasis throughout the lower grades is upon reading for meaning, reading quantities of easy, interesting books to reach the point of automatic response to the common words of English in any context, and gradual increase in independence in working out new words. Methods of developing interest in wide reading and the beginnings of study habits are discussed in detail. Phonics is treated in relation to reading and as a means of developing independence in word recognition.

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Diagnosis of children's progress and methods of thinking and working is a continuing matter and remedial treatment is instituted the moment need is recognized. Suggestions are also given for the care of children who deviate, the children with sensory deficiencies and those of low mental ability:

Writing and spelling are treated as tools which must be mastered in order to be used. Attention is given to the needs and abilities of children at different developmental levels, and methods of teaching are suggested which are in line with the teachings of research and modern practice.

Language enters into the discussion of the quantitative concepts of children in the chapter on arithmetic. There are detailed discussions of the development of time sense and space sense in children in the social studies chapter. The language arts play a central role in all education and at all levels of development.

It is suggested that superintendents and principals use the handbook as a source of reading and discussion material for teachers' meetings and conferences. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction is offering the services of the members of the committee to hold meetings and institutes to interpret the material and help teachers utilize it. Other committees now at work in the state may later bring to teachers more specific help with some curriculum areas. This handbook is a little leaven disseminated in a conservative state to encourage and help teachers meet the needs of children.



# We All Had A Hand In It

EDNA L. STERLING<sup>1</sup>

"Why didn't *they* learn that in the elementary school? What do *they* do down there anyway?"

"They have to have this in high school. The high-school teachers expect *them* to know *it*."

"Yes, but if *they* are going to college *they* . . . . ."

The voice trails off, but the implied accusation survives as a recurrent excuse, a defense, or a rationalization.

That was six years ago. Of course there are still rumblings and reverberations, but the Language Arts Committees of Seattle Public Schools have, to some extent at least, dispelled the sense of guilt and futility evidenced by such remarks. They have supplied answers to some of the *why's*. The *where's* have been answered by teachers who have tried to discover the particular function of each level of the language programs as well as the learning most needed and most easily acquired by each different age group. The *what's* have been answered by determining the actual language requirements of the average individual in life and by simplifying the teaching of those essentials so that the child can acquire step by step the understandings, the attitudes, and the skills that are necessary preparation for intelligent participation in democratic living today.

For six years the teachers and administrators have carried on a cooperative program of investigation and planning with the result that the Seattle Schools now have a new course of study in the expressional phases of the Language Arts extending from kindergarten through the senior year in high school.

Moreover, the full sequence is in the hands of every teacher so that the steps in the progression, the unity, and continuity of purpose are made clear to the entire staff. Through a guidebook, which is in the hands of every pupil from grades four to twelve, the students also become aware of the emphases placed on certain parts of their work and of the purposes of the language program. A common understanding of purposes on the part of teachers who are eager to make clear to pupils desirable goals and possible means of attaining these goals is certainly one advance, at least, toward accomplishment.

Just what are these emphases that form the framework of both the course of study and the students' guidebook?

As the committees surveyed the field and analyzed their problems, they arrived at some basic principles on which there was agreement. These principles have served as guide lines and have at all times been determinants in important decisions. In keeping with the *Basic Aims* of the National Council of Teachers of English, these premises recognize:

1. That language is a medium of communication and therefore is the hub of all living; its experience value is not confined to language or English classes.
2. That since communication is a fundamental means of building understanding among people, language is vital to democratic living.
3. That clear thinking is the foundation for effective language expression, either oral or written.

<sup>1</sup>Consultant for the Language Arts in Seattle Public Schools, Seattle, Washington.

4. That a strong personal incentive is an important factor in learning and that "the intellectual level reached by a child is associated with the degree of stimulation given him."<sup>2</sup>
5. That development of language power results from environmental influence rather than from isolated drills and study of rules.
6. That drill is effective in proportion to its functional use when the child is in need of fixing an understood concept.
7. That language experience should allow for the highest possible development of the individual; but that an individual's power is measured by the effectiveness of his participation in the group.

Both the course of study and the guide-books assume that the language training given children must be training in living language, language that has meaning in present experience and at the same time is preparation for both individual and group associations in the world of tomorrow. The teachers discovered that these needs are really very simple, not nearly so complex and difficult as they all too often appear to children. The three fundamental abilities necessary for effective participation in any social order are ability to study, and that is to collect, organize, and use materials, whether gained through observation, listening, or reading; ability to speak; and ability to write. These abilities, as well as the needs for them, differ greatly both because of age level and because of a wide range of individual differences within any stage or group. Yet in spite of a wide variety of difference in age, status, and individual types, the language needs for all students are the same: ability to

think clearly and skill in expressing thought effectively through the medium of either speech or writing.

The Seattle language arts curriculum committees have developed a program that recognizes three fundamental processes in the language cycle: impression or the acquiring of ideas; assimilation, the making material one's own; and expression, the end to which the first two stages must contribute. Too often expression fails in effectiveness merely because the two preparatory steps have been omitted.

The course of study suggests for each grade Experience Areas representative of interests and materials, and lists for each section suitable Learning Experiences; it also provides a Supporting Program for building habits and developing skills. The Evaluation Program, always in terms of the goals, has three types of measurement: opportunities for growth, evidences of growth, and standard criteria. A bibliography concludes each grade section.

The course of study is organized in four main divisions: Kindergarten-Primary; Intermediate; Junior High School; Senior High School. Although speaking and writing are closely related in their functional values and are interrelated so that often one is preparation for the other, in the course of study the two types of work are presented separately.

Although the course gives the teacher a double-page chart showing the content material, the activities, the forms, and language skills needed for a grade or special phase of work, it does not present completely developed units or plans. Rather, it demands that language teaching be continually alive and new by reason of awareness of the language possibilities in every new situation and experience. The course of study points the direction and establishes some of the limits for each level; it does not prescribe the mode of travel.

<sup>2</sup>American Education Research Association. *The Implication of Research for the Classroom Teacher*, Second Printing, October, 1941. Washington, D. C.: Joint Yearbook: American Educational Research Association and the Department of Classroom Teachers, 1939. p. 71.

Each teacher must formulate plans for every enterprise. Varied itineraries, unexpected stopovers, surprise excursions into an unexplored field, discovery of the unknown will make every venture a new learning experience. To use this course of study the teacher must make his own plans. This demand takes language out of the textbook and places it in the lives of children.

Teachers who are developing in their pupils attitudes of tolerance, open-mindedness, and understanding of varied points of view appreciate more fully than formerly the causes for prejudice and demand from themselves as well as from others conclusions based on evidence rather than on opinion; they learn to make judgments only after an investigation of all sides of the question.

More than a year before the course itself was completed, teachers realized that there was a need for uniformity in certain forms and practices. Textbooks were inadequate: they differed widely in practices and forms; they repeated the same things at several grade levels; much of the material included for national consumption was not suited to local requirements. The committees decided to prepare their own handbook for classroom use. In four months they wrote, edited, and presented to the school board for publication two manuscripts. The next school year two guidebooks for the language arts, one for the elementary schools, the other for junior and senior high schools, were placed in the hands of all students. The purposes underlying the preparation of these books are the same as those for the course of study: to assist children to become independent in study, in speaking, in writing. Both books, therefore, have three sections: Standards for Speaking, Standards for Writing, Procedures for Study.

Standards for Speaking sets up a sequence for growth in oral work, ranging from frag-

mentary comments through the report, to the symposium and the round table discussion, and provides specific help in pronunciation, individual and group speech situations, parliamentary procedure, and such daily practices as making and receiving introductions, making telephone calls, conducting interviews, and giving and taking directions.

Standards for Writing is concerned only with the standards and forms that support adequate written presentation of thought, practical, service types of writing needed by every person. Writing as a creative expression is reserved for the experience program in the course of study. In addition to the sequence of writing the section sets standards for handwriting, page form, spelling, punctuation and forms for letter writing. The section on Study includes directions for library procedures, for outlining, for note taking, and for making and using bibliographies. The guidebook is a reference book for the individual pupil. In it he can find answers to many questions that arise daily.

Determining just what material should be included in the guidebook was a major problem. Teachers believed that inclusions should be limited to material important to all students, that the language should be simple, and the form condensed and easy of reference. The teachers decided, further, that only one form or way of doing a thing would be presented. This meant that in the case of letter forms, spelling, pronunciation, one of two or three possible and often fully acceptable ways had to be determined upon as, for us at least, preferable.

This decision seemed at first to present too many difficulties. Very soon, however, everyone was willing to yield personal preferences in favor of a policy agreed upon by all. The policy accepted was to choose always the simple, the most logical, the one having the

best established usage in college or business, the forwardlooking form or way. There is no inclination to have students think that the way selected is the only, or even in some cases the best way. It is the one that seemed the most desirable for Seattle, and teachers have agreed to abide by committee decisions. The guidebooks, for instance, present only the block form for letters, only the classical form and the open style of punctuation in outlines, and only the simplest and most recent usage in punctuation. This policy is expected to be economical of time and productive of better form.

The story of how all this was accomplished is more interesting than, and quite as important, as the books themselves. All curriculum development is designed to bring about change, and desirable evaluation in attitudes or points of view result more frequently from conference and experimentation than from reading what someone else has recorded. Well aware that participation is the only assurance of interest and cooperation, the curriculum development has drawn into the work, over a period of several years, all language teachers in the city.

Naturally, two thousand teachers cannot conveniently share equally in contribution or responsibility, but it is fair to say that every teacher in Seattle had an opportunity to help and that the majority did assist either directly or indirectly. The 1944 course of study<sup>3</sup> is a revision of the 1942 report furnished to teachers by individual grades. Comments, favorable or adverse, sent in from all schools and grade levels determined the forms used, the styles selected, and the points of view adopted. Every suggestion received consideration; the majority opinion prevailed; the minority protest was a valuable check.

Curriculum development in the language

<sup>3</sup>*Guideposts for the Expressional Phases of the Language Arts.*

arts, as in all fields in the Seattle Public Schools, is directed by Assistant Superintendent W. Virgil Smith. The developmental program for any special field is in charge of a consultant in that subject or field. The course of study for the Expressional Phases of the Language Arts was prepared under the direction of a central or core group, called a coordinating committee. This committee, operating directly with the consultant, was formed in 1938 and continued until the course was completed. Each member of the coordinating committee was in turn chairman of a horizontal committee drawn from that grade level. The coordinating committee directed and accepted the work of the horizontal committees; it formulated policies and made decisions. The horizontal committees carried on studies and prepared materials for specific grades. After the material was gathered from classroom teachers, the actual writing of the course of study was carried on by special representatives from each grade division. A small editorial committee then rewrote the copy and prepared it for printing.

The present language arts curriculum program in Seattle has been a cooperative undertaking over a period of six years. No one asked to be relieved of responsibility; a number asked to be included; only those who left the corps failed to carry through to the publication of the course of study and the two guidebooks. Supervisors and principals as well as teachers gave both time and the results of valuable experience to the preparation and revision of material. The school librarians prepared the sections on Library Practice, supplying both lists of references and library procedures in which children should be trained. The speech supervisors planned the speech work, giving careful attention to wording, while the primary supervisors had the say regarding anything in kindergarten-primary departments.



# Teaching Brotherhood at P.S. 37 Manhattan

(THE SCHOOL OF OPPORTUNITY)

LILLIAN L. RASHKIS and

HAZEL R. MITTELMAN<sup>1</sup>

Public School 37 Manhattan is a School of Opportunity for boys in Manhattan and the Bronx, who are out of step with their classmates, their schools, their families, and their neighborhood acquaintances.

Every boy who enters 37 is made to feel that this is a school of opportunity where a fellow is given a real chance to make good. The past is forgotten; only the present, with its rich opportunities for service and mutual helpfulness, counts. His teachers are his friends; in some cases, his second parents. Every child is considered a person possessing human dignity, and therefore entitled to respect. He is made to feel secure, confident, wanted. He is made to feel that he has something to contribute to the welfare or progress of his group; and he experiences the lift that comes from achievement and success no matter how small his offering, whether it be in the assembly hall, the wood-working shops, the print shop, the classroom, the lunchroom, the school yard, or in his school clubs.

Many nationalities are represented in the school population, but despite these variances in cultural background there exists in the school a unity and a loyalty based upon the boys' active and wholesome participation in a social group which is free from confusion or conflict.

The tone of 37 is set in our assemblies; and from here emanate the true quality and spirit of the school. It is here that school and class problems are discussed, and ways and means devised to implement suggestions which

grow out of cooperative thinking and planning. This, we believe and emphasize, is the way of self-government, the way of the New England town meeting, the American way. There is no discrimination in our assemblies. Every boy feels that 37 is *his* school, that *he* has a stake in its success, and that it is *his* job, in cooperation with his classmates, to maintain its high standards, or bring about improvements where improvements seem to be necessary. No boy is made to feel that he is brighter than another, or better than another, or that he is entitled to greater respect and admiration because of his color or lack of color.

Resentment, born of discrimination and insecurity, breeds and generates hatred. We at 37 are convinced that resentment cannot exist when open discussion, with its invariable concomitants—fair play, respectful and patient listening, and free interchange of ideas—is every-day practice.

The classrooms, too, are laboratories for cooperative, social and harmonious living. Here the teacher sets the tone. She is unprejudiced, unbiased and understanding, and she becomes the model to which the boys aspire.

One of our most successful units was concerned with the study of propaganda. Its bearing upon this problem is quite evident. "What is propaganda?" the boys asked. Can it be good as well as bad? When is it good? How can we test it? The boys learned to analyze statements made in the press, on the

<sup>1</sup>Principal and teacher, respectively, at Public School 37, 113 East 87th St., New York City.

radio, and on street corners by neighborhood agitators, and to examine them in the light of certain criteria. The boys discovered that beneath beguiling labels, glittering generalities, and tailor-made truths, there lurked discrepancies, misstatements and even deliberate lies. They became critical of the language of the demagogue, the hater, the deceiver and the disuniter, and soon learned to avoid the common snares and pitfalls which might be set for them.

No one alive today can possibly escape the present realities or the future consequences of this great war which has affected and modified the mode of living, and the manner of thinking, of all the peoples of the globe. Living as they do on the threshold of a new era, the boys of 37 were eager to understand the nature of this struggle and the great moral issues involved, so that when victory for democracy is finally achieved, they will be prepared to take their rightful places as citizens of a world democracy.

With this in mind, the classes at 37 undertook units of instruction based upon a central theme, "The United Nations Win the War." Each of the classes chose to study about one or more of the Allied countries, and considered not only the place of each in the total war picture, and the sufferings of the people at the hands of the enemy, but the historical, geographic and social background as well.

Our assembly programs were an integral and vital part of the school project. Each Thursday we invited a member of one of the United Nations to speak to the boys. In this way the entire school gained first-hand information about the peoples of more than thirty-five foreign countries. Some of our visitors had lived through the darkest days of their country's history, and had experienced the dull and despairing feeling of defeat. Some had barely escaped from the hands of the

enemy, and were now working in a free America to bring about an Allied victory.

All the speakers were men and women of authority, position, and education, and their stories were accurate and dramatic. A Czech professor was in his homeland when the Nazis invaded his country. Another speaker had lived in Java most of his life and in Holland for the past seven years. His mother had been killed in an air-raid and his father had been taken prisoner by the Germans. He himself, having fled from Holland, was now engaged in the task of helping to liberate his own country.

Still another of our visitors had been a teacher in a junior college in Greece, and remembered poignantly her own students as she spoke to ours. One of the most thrilling speakers was a man who had witnessed many battles between the Chinese and the Japanese, and had fought with Chinese guerrilla bands behind the lines.

A question period of about twenty minutes followed each talk. In all cases the boys asked questions that were interesting, thoughtful, and provocative. They were more than eager to learn about other peoples, other nationalities, other races. They had had certain conceptions of the life, habits, and customs of these peoples, and they wanted to have them confirmed or refuted.

They wanted to know, for instance, why all Greeks (those old stereotypes, again!) were good cooks, and why all Chinese parents bound their children's feet. And, so far as Russia was concerned, well—they learned more about the Russian people than any books at their reading level might have told them.

They delighted to hear our Chinese visitor speak Chinese; our guest from India sing Hindu songs; and our New Zealand speaker explain the significance of the Haka, which the Maoris dance when they go into battle.

They were deeply impressed and moved whenever any of our speakers described the magnificent courage of the men, women, and children who were somehow living and working and managing to retain their dignity in the face of war's real agonies.

The guests who came to us from Mexico and Central and South America gave our Spanish speaking boys a decided "lift." They conversed with one another, (guest and students), while the rest of the boys, not understanding a word, nevertheless listened admiringly. It was good for everyone: for the guest who felt that his audience was with him; for the boys who found themselves suddenly in the limelight; and for the rest of the group who realized with some pride that their Spanish speaking classmates were a little ahead of them. It was a grand feeling for everyone.

All the classes knew the national anthem of "their" particular country, and asked each visitor if he wished to hear them sing his country's song. All joined in. Here was real and actual living of an ideal.

Our visual instruction program was planned to present a vivid and dramatic picture of all the nations with whom we were allied. So far as it was possible to do so, without actually visiting the countries involved, our boys felt a kinship with these people whose destinies were so inextricably interwoven with ours.

Last term we had as our main assembly theme, "The United Nations Win the Peace," and again we had speakers from the Allied Nations. This time they told the boys what their countries hoped to do for their people after the war, and how they planned to cooperate to maintain a lasting peace for all mankind. They stressed the ideal of brotherhood and unity, and they fervently prayed that the United Nations might work together in peace as they are working in war.

We, and I mean the boys and the teachers, have succeeded through our units and our close contacts with the men and women of at least forty nations, in identifying ourselves with most of the peoples of the earth.

Our class units this term are concerned with some phase of our own country's history. We had several purposes in mind, which might be summarized in this way:

To identify the United States with the other nations of the world.

To show how peoples of all nationalities working together, helped to discover, settle and build our country.

To emphasize the responsibilities as well as the rights that belong to an American citizen.

To show that in a democracy all men are equal and that there are no masters and no slaves.

A unit of work which we planned for our 8B boys and which they carried out most successfully this term, is called, "Character, Social and Vocational Guidance." It set up standards of conduct in school, in society, and at work, and it stressed the responsibilities which each boy must undertake, if he would lead a satisfactory life. The boys engaged in free and stimulating discussions of what they considered to be the satisfactory life, and they emphasized very definitely the importance of harmonious and cooperative living. Such living is based upon mutual respect; and they spoke about the ways in which they might gain the respect of their fellow-men.

They felt, too, that in order to improve their own characters and enhance their opportunities for success, they must read about the lives of great men of all nationalities and races who, even in the face of enormous obstacles, became leaders in science, literature, education and the arts of peace. They read, among others, Booker T. Washington's *Up from*

*Slavery*, Rackham Holt's *George Washington Carver*, Michael Pupin's *From Immigrant to Inventor*, and Edward Bok's *Americanization of Edward Bok*. They made a list of those characteristics which helped Washington, Carver, Pupin, and Bok attain their goals, and they analyzed their own characters according to these criteria. This phase of the project

had two fine results: the boys had the feeling that in spite of some personal shortcomings, they themselves really weren't so bad; and they realized that it didn't make much difference to what nationality or what race you belonged; you could make your contribution, small as it might be, to the welfare of your group, or the progress of the world.

PUBLIC SCHOOL 37, MANHATTAN  
113 EAST 87TH STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.

has the honor to invite you to a series of assembly programs  
on BROTHERHOOD, under the general title

**WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE**

on

THURSDAY MORNINGS

at 11:00 o'clock

*Lillian L. Rashkis*, Principal

**WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE**  
**THURSDAY MORNING AT 11:00 O'CLOCK**

DATE	SPEAKER	TOPIC
Mar. 2	Dr. WILLARD JOHNSON Nat'l Conference of Christians and Jews	What is Prejudice?
Mar. 9	Rev. EDWARD J. HOGAN, S. J. St. Ignatius Loyola	What is Brotherhood?
Mar. 16	Rev. LEON SULLIVAN Rendall Memorial Presbyterian Church	Brotherhood and the Good Life.
Mar. 30	Dr. EARL HUMES Society of Friends	Brotherhood and Peace.
Apr. 6	RABBI ERWIN ZIMET Park Avenue Synagogue	Brotherhood, the Foundation of Democracy
Apr. 20	Dr. ROBERT W. SEARLE Greater New York Federation of Churches	What Part Can Youth Play in Achieving True Brotherhood?
May 4	Mr. LIU LIANG-MO United China Relief	What is Race? Are Races Inferior or Superior?
May 6	Mr. CANADA LEE, Actor Rev. JAMES HENRY ROBINSON Church of the Master	Education and Brotherhood. Is Brotherhood Possible?
May 11	SWAMI NIKHILANANDA Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center	World Brotherhood.
May 18	Rev. Dr. L. WENDELL FIFIELD Plymouth Church of the Pilgrims	Great Americans Who Have Symbolized the Ideal of Brotherhood.
June 1	RABBI IRA EISENSTEIN Society for the Advancement of Judaism	"With Malice Toward None."
June 8	Dr. A. M. DORF - Ver Frelsers Kirke	The Open Door.



"With Malice Toward None" was the title of the Brotherhood programs arranged for the Spring term.

Speakers of all religions and races were represented, and every phase of the problem was discussed. An examination of our program will reveal the extent of the project, and the care with which speakers and topics were selected.

It was our intention and hope that the impact of these Brotherhood talks would be actively felt not only by the boys, but by their parents as well; and so we sent them written invitations explaining the purpose of our series, and urging them to be with us every Thursday. Despite the fact that the mothers and fathers of 37 are burdened with household and family cares, and many of them work during the day, their response to our appeal was most gratifying. Every meeting saw a dozen or more parents in our assembly.

The talks were excellent; they were informally presented and specific in content. Even the very youngest children in the group came away with something tangible, because each of the speakers realized the worth of stories and parables, and used them freely. A good simple story was worth more than the most elaborate sermon.

Don't think that these speeches were pigeon-holed and quickly forgotten. Far from it! Each talk was transcribed by our stenographer, and summaries of it were given to the boys in each class. These resumés, together with additional discussion topics, became the basis for a spirited interchange of ideas in every classroom, with the teacher acting as moderator.

Each assembly talk was followed by a question period; and, considering that the boys are, for the most part, of dull-normal intelligence, the growth in pupil thinking was

felt to be truly remarkable. Here are some of the questions which our boys asked during these sessions:

Do you think that Germany and Japan should be represented at the peace table?

You said that we have to make friends with the Japanese. Don't you think it's going to be difficult after what the Japanese did to us in the South Pacific?

The Germans have been under Fascist rule for quite some time, and have been taught that they are a master race. How do you expect us to teach them brotherhood and equality, when they have been taught for at least nine years under Hitler that they are a superior race? Nine years is a long time in which to destroy a philosophy like that.

You said people should have convictions. What about a man with wrong convictions? What can we do to help him?

Do you really believe everybody is God's child? What about Hitler and the other Nazis?

With Hitler and his agents preaching race prejudice, how can we get all the people back to living together again after the war?

If you get rid of imperialism, there will be more brotherhood. Don't you think so?

You said that we must create a feeling of brotherhood among all men. But some people don't want to be brothers. They say to you: "I don't like your color"; or "I don't like your race." How can we change that attitude?

If the Hindus believe that all people are made of the same stuff, and possess the same spirit, why are there different classes among the Hindus? Why can't they intermarry?

The effects of this program have been far-reaching. Having interested the parents in the importance of wholesome attitudes and relationships, and having brought home to

# Visual Aids in the Language Arts Program

VICTOR COLES<sup>1</sup>

Visual aids can be used effectively to enrich the language arts program. The simplest means to initiate such a program is through the use of still or flat pictures which are so common and available and have long been recognized as valuable aids in the transmission of ideas. Because of their interest-holding qualities, their directness of appeal and their cheapness, they are the most widely used of visual aids.

Certain attributes, however, must be common to all these pictures whether they be photographs, advertisements, prints, textbook illustrations, or post cards. First, the picture must be authentic on the basis of the best available data; second, the picture must be relevant to some principle that is being taught; third, the picture should contain a minimum of detail; fourth, the technical qualities should be good, that is, the light and shadows should be well distributed and few blemishes present; and fifth, all pictures should be designed to stimulate interest and thought by their attractiveness.

One way for language arts teachers to use pictorial representation is in the teaching of picture words or adjectives. The teacher first shows the class a number of scenes such as a waterfall, a mountain, a forest, a flood, a fire, the ocean, a meadow, or a crowded street. These pictures will kindle the imagination and as the teacher holds up picture after picture such words as gloomy, steep, raging, dark, glittering, and fierce are suggested and enlarged upon by the class and teacher. These are written on the board. Children come forward to pick

various pictures that match the words just written on the board. To continue the lesson the teacher asks questions that include the adjectives just given and relates them to the picture. For example she asks, "How would you like to fish in this sparkling brook?" or "Why would some birds like to build their nests in this gloomy forest?" The children in turn are encouraged to use the same or even better adjectives in replying to the questions. It is well to follow up this lesson with the reading of a descriptive poem and ask the children to listen for word-pictures painted with adjectives. Suggested books for such readings are *The Golden Staircase*, by L. Chisholm, *This Singing World*, by L. Untermyer, and *The Listening Child*, compiled by L. Thatcher.

Much of the education of the past and some of the present is based on the assumption that the child is already equipped with an adequate supply of imagery or mental pictures and it is the work of education to build new ideas and to organize new fields of thought with this material. But is there justification for this belief? Many pupils have never been outside their immediate locality in which they were born and even are ignorant of many activities which are going on in their own neighborhood. And yet language arts teachers will encourage pupils to use better and more colorful speech when the children are unable to conjure up the proper image for lack of seeing experience. Words are in themselves empty. They are merely symbols for images

<sup>1</sup>Assistant professor of education, Teachers College, University of Cincinnati.

Illustrations, A. M. Schmidt.

that are already in the mind and not agencies for placing images there. Trafficking in beautiful sounding adjectives will not educate the children. Imagery must be provided first; then the correct word or symbol must be connected with it.

Fascinating and instructive assignments to obtain the necessary imagery in the use of adjectives may be given pupils with the aid of still pictures. The children are asked to search over a period of days for pictures that match descriptive words taken from a reading lesson, a poem, or vocabulary list. Such words as these may be assigned or taken over by the children: "frenzied," "brawny," "irritated," "solemn," "prosperous," "weary," "confused," and "contrary." The meaning is looked up in the dictionary and then a hunt begins for pictures to fit the word. Pictures from various books in the room may be used if necessary.

Another method of doing this is to have on display large, as well as numbered pictures, which are to match certain words met with in the daily classwork. As the child looks in the dictionary for the definition of "brawny," he knows such a word signifies strong muscles. He looks at the pictures and among them he sees that #6 is, for instance, a man exhibiting a strong right arm with the muscle in evidence. He knows in a flash that the word "brawny" matches that picture. An association is built up which vitalizes the meaning of "brawny." The sensory experience provided by the picture speeded up the learning process.

If an opaque projector is available these pictures may be screened by means of it and an oral recitation take place such as this: "Which word best describes this man with the strong right arm — 'brawny,' 'delicate,' 'brave,' or 'gaunt'?" Not more than fifteen pictures should be shown in this way. The teacher, however, will find an increase in interest and an aggressive effort to enlarge

vocabularies through such a use of pictures and word definition. This increase evolves naturally as a product of improved understanding.

By way of explanation it might be well to say that an opaque projector is a device which enables a teacher to magnify on the screen pictures from books, magazines, and other opaque material. The light within the machine is directed upon the picture or object to be projected and these reflected rays are gathered upon the picture by the lens system to form the screen image. A tremendous amount of material is available from books, newspapers, postcards, pupils' papers, all of which are inexpensive.

Different types of people often provide material for the use of adjectives. Either the teacher or pupils cut out pictures of various types of human beings. There may be a farmer, a minister, an Indian, a soldier, a child, a laborer, a baby, a woman, a man, a pirate, an athlete, a tramp, and a banker. The class is asked to fit suitable adjectives or picture words to the various people shown. At first, such simple words as "pretty," "poor," "brave," "nice," and "good" are used. But the teacher points out that there are better words to be employed. She explains that the word "nice" could apply to the woman, the child, the baby, and even the minister. She asks, "What does the picture show that would suggest words that are more suitable and appropriate?" She cajoles them into putting on magic spectacles so that they may see more accurately and with greater detail. Such words as these then evolve: an industrious farmer, a carefree child, a courageous soldier, a prosperous banker, a feeble man, a chubby baby, a vicious pirate, and a brawny laborer.

Further visual material for encouraging the use of adjectives is found in certain movies which contain beautiful and striking scenes. Three such movies out of a long list are "The

Gateway to the West," (silent-Yale); "In Old Guatemala," (silent-Fox); and "Ohio Travelogs," (silent-Visual Instruction Exchange). See Appendix for list of distributors of scenic movies. In using the silent movies the children not only spot the adjectives in reading the titles but as the scenes pass before them they suggest added picture words. After the viewing of either sound or silent movies the teacher may ask the children to fill in descriptive blanks to describe what has been projected. Example:

1. The (*lofty*) mountains spread before the (*weary*) pioneer.
2. (*Rustling*) leaves crunched under the feet of (*courageous*) Daniel Boone.
3. (*Bedraggled*) natives sold their wares at the (*dusty*) roadside.

At another time the teacher may discuss with the pupils what the movie has depicted. As she asks questions she uses adjectives and in turn encourages their use in answers. Example:

1. How wide do you think the *lazy* river was?
2. Why did the *amazed* Indians stop following Daniel Boone?

Lists of adjectives used in the foregoing discussion are put on the board. Children are encouraged to listen as well as look for picture words in all movies. Pupils that are low in imagination and intelligence, or even low in reading ability are often helped by these pictorial procedures. If a child can read an adjective it is no sign he understands it, for words may be used glibly with no true comprehension. Word learning is not enough. The teacher must provide a background of sensory experience so that words take on meaning.

Slides, likewise, are valuable aids to a teacher in enriching language through the use of adjectives. The British Isles Series (26-Keystone) and the Burns Country (10-Eastman) are examples of scenic slides that

may be used. (See Appendix II for additional slides to use). Slides are even superior to movies in this study, for individual scenes may be discussed from the screen for a longer period of time. The teacher calls for and encourages expressions of beauty concerning the slides. The same class procedure as suggested previously for the movies may be provided for the slides.

Not only can scenes be used, but pictures of food may be utilized so as to develop a vocabulary which tantalizes the sense of taste. Berries will not just be "ripe" but the pictures of slides from various Health Series may suggest words as "luscious" or "appetizing." Advertisements of fruit and vegetables can also be made into appealing posters using pertinent adjectives. Children are asked to search for clever descriptive words which advertisers use. Such examples are brought to school, discussed, and suggestions made for their use on posters.

The type of slides previously described were those bought, rented, or loaned from various companies, but it would be well to consider the handmade slide that a language arts teacher may use. These teachers, no doubt, would use slides oftener if they were handy. Nothing could be more convenient than slides which pupils and teachers make together. The pupil-teacher slide has already made a place for itself in other teaching areas. In constructing hand-made slides the children are not merely exposed to an experience, they are a part of it. They are cooperators and producers in experiences that will make a lasting impression upon them. Frequently, the teacher is unable to draw accurately on a frosted slide. It may be that her pupils, likewise, are not gifted artistically. In that case, various sketches may be easily and readily traced on the frosted glass, cellophane, or tissue paper with medium lead pencil. Simply put the glass, cellophane or tissue paper over the sketch and

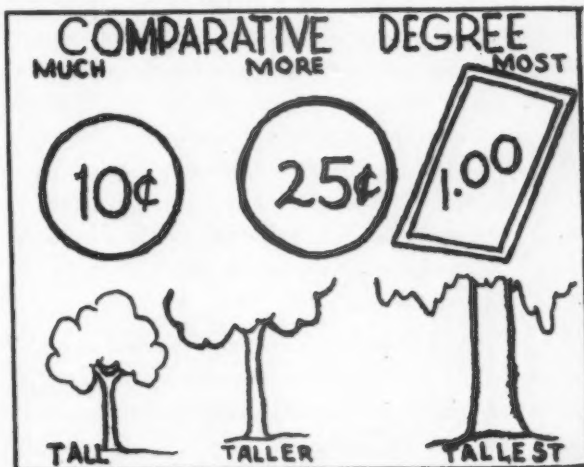


trace around the outline. Be sure to join carefully all lines that meet each other; if this is not done the tracing on the slide will appear to be disconnected and incongruous. Strips of cellophane and tissue paper may be bought at the five and ten cent stores or stationery stores. Hardware stores will supply the frosted glass cut to the lantern slide of  $4 \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ . A handy kit for those interested in making home-made lantern slides may be purchased from The Keystone Company of Meadville, Pennsylvania. Included in this package are crayons, inks, frosted glass, cellophane, binders, and cover glasses. The frosted glass may be used time after time by simply applying a kitchen cleanser to the sketched surface and rubbing off drawings. If the frosted glass is to be preserved a cover glass is put over the slide on which the tracing was made and the two pieces of glass are bound together with binding tape. If no preservation is to be made the slide may be used without cover glass. The cellophane slide is slipped into a frame provided for in the kit. The tissue paper slide also needs a frame which the children can make from bogus paper.

On these home-made slides may be traced or sketched by pupils scenes of dense forests, babbling brooks, and raging fires or whatever scenes may be desirable to illustrate adjectives. As the class views the pupil-made slides they suggest adjectives which the slide-maker might have had in mind. In like manner articles of food may be drawn on slides, such as tempting glasses of milk, a crisp piece of toast, a bowl of steaming porridge, or a juicy steak. These aids are not extraneous but are valuable tools in deepening the learning process. Oftentimes the timid child gains confidence and assurance when his slide is projected on the screen.

In an up-to-date program of language arts it must be knowledge by acquaintance rather than knowledge by description. This acquaint-

ance comes by association either with the real activity or object or from vicarious pictorial experience. The desire of human beings to handle and to look at objects is universal and thus comes our knowledge by acquaintance. Children need direct contact in the language arts classes with different kinds of colored cloth, pottery, tree bark, leaves, straw, stones, toads, seeds, odors, and many other raw materials. A three dimensional world grows for the children for they see not only color, but feel the weight, examine the texture, and smell the fragrance. As these objects are carefully scrutinized, words that best describe them should be recorded. Such expressions as deep velvet, royal purple, petal softness, swish of silk, clammy toad, cold as steel, satin smooth, fineness of sugar, coarseness of rice, and slick as straw should be preserved and encouraged. Pupils are mastering and using words which they have experienced. They have not merely looked; they have made observations which



involved thinking and interpreting, as well as seeing. Depth has been added to living. Along with such identification should come the idea of comparison. One piece of cloth is beautiful, another is more beautiful while a third piece is really the most beautiful. Here is an excellent opportunity to use the com-

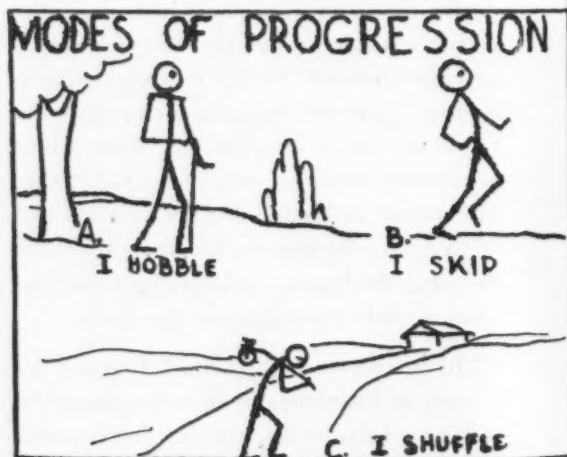
parative degrees in adjectives. Examples: The walnut bark is rougher than the cherry bark; silk is smoother than serge.

It is not enough to teach the comparative degree but the superlative degree should likewise be taught. Home-made slides may be employed to bring this about. As has been explained in this article tracings may be made on slides to clarify certain teaching procedures. For this activity a copy is made on the slide of a loaf of bread, some eggs, and a bottle of milk. Under the first illustration is the word "good," under the second "better," and under the last is the word "best." Children are asked to construct sentences about these articles of food using the adjectives traced under them. This may result: Bread is good, eggs are better, but milk is best. Another tracing of the same type is made of three faces varying in sadness. The identical procedure as outlined heretofore takes place. Other sketches of this character are given for the teacher to use on slides. This lesson will no doubt invite and create the desire within the pupils to draw some of their own degrees of comparison and label them. They may be put on the bulletin board for others to see. Posters may even be made showing this same idea. Imagination will stir pupils and friendly competition will start in inventing and originating various ideas of comparison for slides, for the bulletin board and for posters.

Slides, still pictures, and movies may also be used to enrich the vocabulary of pupils as regards the various forms of progression used by animals, including man. To merely say that a person walks is not sufficient. In a snowstorm a person might plod or trudge but during a rain storm he might scamper or paddle along. If one should see an animal it might be prowling, stalking, roaming, or gliding. An elderly person, perhaps, would limp or saunter but a young child would skip, frisk, or leap. Various pictorial forms of the above

modes of motion may be suggested to the pupils. Lists of such words are made by the pupils for future use in their creative writing. Still pictures are posted on the walls with pupil-made inscriptions such as "The tired woman trudged through the snow," or "The snake glided through the grass near the fence." Sketches indicating motion accompany this article. These sketches may be traced on slides. As the slides are screened the members of the class tell what form of motion is illustrated on the slide, and give a sentence which uses that descriptive word of motion.

In sound and silent movies the walking of different characters may be watched and later reported upon. As a preparation for the movie lesson the teacher may discuss with the class certain forms of motion that are likely to take place in the movie and ask the pupils to spot them. In the movie entitled "Columbus," (Yale), the discoverer of America is shown before Queen Isabelle and King Ferdinand. One sees Columbus addressing the throne eager with expectation. His step is light as he introduces the idea of a world that is round. Later on, after a refusal from royalty to give him money, the weary Columbus drags himself along the road. After the movie, the modes of walking are discussed, contrasted, and listed. These words of progression are



definitely impressed upon the children because they have not only heard the word but they have seen what it means. Their attempts at writing will reveal this understanding because a sensory experience has been at the basis of the information received and such experience makes instruction meaningful, appealing, and clear.

The following film distributors will provide catalogs describing films useful in a visual language art program.

**DISTRIBUTORS:**

Eastman—Eastman Kodak Company, Rochester, New York  
 International—International Film Bureau, 59 East Van Buren Street, Chicago, Illinois.  
 Haselton—Guy D. Haselton, 7936 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood, California.

Yale—Yale University Press, Film Service, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York, New York  
 Films of Commerce—Films of Commerce, Inc., 21 West 46th Street, New York, New York  
 Bell & Howell—Bell & Howell, 1801-1815 Larchmont Avenue, Chicago, Illinois  
 Encyclopaedia Britannica Films Inc., 1841 Broadway, New York 23, N. Y.  
 T. V. A.—Tennessee Valley Authority, Knoxville, Tennessee  
 U. S. D. A.—U. S. Department of Agriculture, Office of Motion Pictures, Washington D. C.  
 Met. Mot. Pic.—Metropolitan Motion Picture Co., 50 Branford Place, Newark, New Jersey  
 T. F. C.—Teaching Film Custodian, Inc., 25 West 43rd Street, New York, New York  
 Keystone—The Keystone Company, Meadville, Pennsylvania  
 F. C.—Films of Commerce, Inc., 21 West 46th Street, New York, New York  
 Harmon—Harmon Foundation, Inc., 140 Nassau Street, New York, New York.

## TEACHING BROTHERHOOD AT P. S. 37 MANHATTAN

(Continued from page 255)

them the need for unity *in* the family group, and beyond, we feel that we have made notable progress toward achieving a wider understanding among all peoples.

Our boys are keenly concerned with the race problem, and with the problems of prejudice connected with it. The boys come to us and say: "When we are graduated from this school, we will miss these talks. Will you send us programs, after we have left school?"

One of our pupils came to school late one day. When asked the reason for this, he answered: "I've been going around trying to get good speakers for our assembly." As a matter of fact, it was this lad who finally persuaded Canada Lee, a busy and well-known

actor, to appear on our program. Some time later, Mr. Lee entertained in his home a group of white and colored boys who are pupils of this school. One of the white boys was later heard to remark proudly: "I know Canada Lee as well as I know my own brother."

White and colored boys play with one another in school and outside, and often eat together in each other's homes.

The boys of 37 are proud of the goal they have set for themselves, and proud of the progress they have made in their own lives, toward its attainment. They want to do their share to create a democracy with brotherhood as its crowning achievement, and they are happy to know that they are moving along the right road.

# Reading Social Studies Materials In The Middle Grades

ALTA McINTIRE<sup>1</sup>

It is generally agreed that teachers in the content fields should also be teachers of reading, but the extent to which this idea has been put into effect varies with situations. It is easy to see the almost unlimited opportunities for improving reading inherent in such practice. Many desirable habits and skills in reading can be motivated and developed more effectively in connection with the social studies or with science than in any other fields. Vocabularies can be increased immeasurably. Related experiences can be provided to enrich impoverished backgrounds. Arithmetical thinking can be increased in accuracy by giving attention to the reading of arithmetic textbooks, and wide reading in the content fields may have a most desirable effect on children's attitudes toward reading. At the same time, the teacher's work becomes more interesting and challenging, and its value is greatly enhanced.

It is the purpose of this paper to present simple, practical suggestions that may be used to improve the reading of middle-grade pupils in the social studies field. Not all suggestions are equally applicable in all situations; but no matter what the status of a group may be insofar as reading ability is concerned, improvement can always be made. Very often children who seem to be doing satisfactory work are not working up to capacity.

## *Developing Readiness for Reading*

Sufficient background to insure intelligent reading should always be built up before an assignment in a book is made. The ability to read and understand any printed matter is

dependent upon the understandings and the reading skills that are already possessed by the reader. The ability to recognize the words printed in a book does not guarantee the ability to read the book intelligently. A child may seem to be reading fluently and not understand any of the material he has read.

To the extent that it is possible, new words should become part of the children's speaking vocabularies before they are encountered in print. Words that have been heard and that have been used orally by the children—provided their meanings are understood—offer much less difficulty when they are seen for the first time than words that are entirely new. Even though concepts are carefully developed in a text, previous experience with them enriches their meanings.

The first concern of the teacher should be to find out what the children already know about the topic under consideration and what experiences they have had that will aid in their interpretations of the materials. This may be accomplished through conversation, questioning, discussion of pictures, examination of objects, pretests, or any other appropriate means. The teacher should then attempt to provide experiences, real or vicarious, that will take care of any deficiencies found.

A point of contact should always be established between what the children already know and what is new. Children who have not seen mountains have undoubtedly seen hills; those who have not seen canyons have

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seen gullies and other stream beds; and those who know nothing about the workings of Congress may have been members of clubs where business was conducted according to rule. Relating the unknown to the known should always constitute part of the preparation for reading.

Pictures aid in developing concepts and building up meanings. The pictures in a good text furnish excellent readiness materials because they are so closely co-ordinated with the content, and they have the advantage of always being available and ready for use. Too often it is taken for granted that children will examine the pictures as they read and get from them what they should. Pictures of combines in fields of wheat or of covered wagons crossing the prairies may be fraught with meaning, or they may be only attractive pictures. Earth forms, historical events, and geographic relationships may be visualized through the study of pictures. Series of pictures relating to the same topics may make industrial processes, historical movements, and other conditions and events concrete. But these objectives will not be achieved if children are left to study the pictures alone. The attention of the group should be called to significant features, questions that will aid in interpretations should be asked, contrasts should be pointed out, and explanations should be made.

The use of the pictures in the text may be supplemented by the use of other pictures, such as collections that have been made by the teacher, purchased collections, motion pictures, or slides. The same careful guidance should accompany the study of these pictures, and the teacher should supplement the information that the children are able to get from them.

Careful selection of such materials should be made. The most important characteristics

and events should be emphasized. It would be possible to show so many pictures of farming in an industrial region as to make it appear that agriculture predominates in importance, and the false impression that the pioneers did nothing but fight the Indians might be created by showing only conflicts between these two groups. The pictures themselves should be scrutinized for accuracy.

Concepts may also be built up by means of demonstrations and experiments. A teacher may help children to understand various map projections by actually removing a cover from a ball and spreading it on a flat surface, or trying to cut a paper so it will just fit over a globe. A flashlight and a globe may be used to explain day and night and change of seasons and to aid children in understanding the printed explanations of these phenomena. Removing seeds from cotton by hand will help children understand the importance of the invention of the cotton gin, and panning for gold will be better understood after the process is demonstrated with sand, gravel, and water in a pan.

Interpretations of physical maps preceding reading will furnish information about location, climate, elevation, surface, harbors, rivers, and other physical features of a region. This information will lead to generalizations by pupils which they will check as they read. Guidance in the reading of special purpose maps, graphs, charts, and tables will develop concepts in regard to such things as winds, rainfall, explorations, populations, and products, all of which will help to make the printed matter intelligible. Globes are also most useful in developing basal concepts and contributing toward readiness for reading.

Most important of all is the stimulating of interest in the material and creating a desire to read it. Children who want to read and who enjoy reading will overcome many of

their own difficulties. Skillful preparation for reading will be valuable to all pupils regardless of their levels of advancement. Even the children who have had the broadest experiences will approach their reading with a different attitude following this period of preparation.

### *Reading and Study Habits*

The first requisite for efficient reading and study habits is that of reading with a purpose in mind. The pupil who reads to learn something that he really wants to know or to secure data to use in problem solving will derive greater benefit from his reading than one who reads without such a purpose.

The purpose for reading should be developed during the period of preparation. The children should state this purpose themselves, although the guidance of the teacher during this period should lead to the formulation of the statement. For instance, after learning what is meant by the Northwest Territory, how it was acquired by the United States, and what some of the problems of the early settlers in this region were, the children may read *to learn how the settlers overcame these difficulties*. After hearing about New York City from members of the group who have visited it, and after seeing pictures of the buildings, parks, famous streets, the water front, and other places of interest, the children may wish to read *to learn why New York has been called the cultural, business, and industrial capital of the United States*.

Reading topic headings or the titles of the different sections in the book will help children anticipate what is to come and may suggest things they wish to learn from their reading. Instead of reading with only one purpose in mind, the children may make a list of questions to which they wish to find answers.

Rate of reading and other reading habits should vary with the materials to be read and the purposes for reading. Too often pupils read everything in the same way, either reading very rapidly without taking time to ponder over what is read and relate it to what is already known, or reading so slowly that there is time to read only a small portion of the material available. Children should learn to skim for the purpose of quickly locating information or to get the gist of relatively unimportant information such as might be found in some newspaper reports. The first reading of an entire assignment may well be a rapid reading, also, to give an overall view of the material to be covered. This should be followed by intensive study of the material.

The first reading of a social studies assignment should be done under the supervision of the teacher if possible. The teacher should give help when it is needed, but she should bend every effort to help the children to help themselves. They should learn that many difficulties are cleared up if they continue reading instead of stopping to study over them during the first reading. They should attempt to learn new words from the context and to use other word-recognition clues.

Difficulties that were general should be taken up with the group before the second reading of the material, but those that were met by individuals only should be cared for individually. General instruction should be given in the use of reference materials, the glossary, if one is included in the book, the index, and the dictionary. Developing independence in the use of the dictionary will include (1) the ability to locate words quickly, (2) skill in the use of the system of diacritical marks employed, and (3) the ability to select the meaning that fits the particular use of the word in question.

Motives for numerous additional readings of materials may be set up for children who will profit by it. They may reread to be able to dramatize incidents described, to clear up obscure points, to find information supporting and opposing certain views, and to carry out many other activities.

The habit of wide reading on the topic under consideration should be encouraged. Books, papers, magazines, and children's encyclopedias may be used. The fact that different books present different versions of the same incident often troubles children. Calling their attention to the fact that their own versions of the same playground incidents often vary, helps them to see that the same happening does not appear the same to all people. They will become interested in comparing the different versions and attempting to evaluate them.

### *Activities to Improve Reading*

The children who finish the reading ahead of the others should have worth-while things to do. They may organize in tables information about cities, products, historical movements, and other topics of interest. They may make notes to use in discussions. Statements of important understandings may be written, and information pertinent to the purpose for reading may be summarized.

Many other types of activities should be planned and carried out by the group. Only a few of them will be listed here, as this list is meant to be suggestive only.

1. A plot of a farm may be drawn to fit the description of a farm in the text.
2. Newspapers and magazines should be watched for items of interest.
3. The children may make newspapers or magazines of their own in which they include: descriptions of the region they are studying, stories about the activities

going on there, information about famous people who live or have lived there, information about the music of the region, reviews of books that tell about it or its inhabitants, cartoons of interesting events, stories of the early days, and other things of interest.

4. Children may learn to read timetables when they are studying transportation and the telephone book when studying communication.
5. Each child may pretend to be a real estate salesman and present as many arguments as possible in favor of buying land in some particular region. Facts about climate, industries, schools, transportation, people, health conditions, languages spoken, and other features may be included.
6. Each child may make riddles about the pictures in the text for the others to guess.
7. Word puzzles will furnish additional experiences with words that are new in the children's vocabularies.
8. The game of *Tell My Name* can be used with maps, tables, and charts. The children may take turns giving statements and the others may find the information that tells the name of the country or feature referred to. For instance, if they are looking at a map of the Scandinavian countries, some of the statements might be:
 

I am the lowest of the Scandinavian countries.

I form the boundary between two of the countries.

There are many fiords along my coast.

I extend farthest toward the north.
9. Outlining should be developed gradually. The first should be simple sentence outlines and should be worked out co-operatively. The children may next

make sentence outlines of their own. Following more co-operative work in which simple outlines with subtopics are developed, the teacher may supply the main headings and ask the pupils to find and write the subtopics. After considerable experience in doing this, outlines of this type may be made by the pupils.

10. The teacher may write a phrase or short sentence that tells what each paragraph in an assignment is about. The children may match the topics and paragraphs.
11. Expressions of opinion that are based on the reading should be called for often.
12. Lists of reasons for statements that are made may be compiled. For instance, the reasons favoring and opposing the purchase of Alaska may be given. The reasons why New England became a manufacturing region, why the North Central states have been called the bread-basket of the world, or why our South is called the "New South" may be written.

#### *Teacher and Pupil Evaluation*

Teachers may judge the value of their work through direct observation of the work of their pupils. They can tell whether or not the children are growing in independence in word recognition, in the ability to use reference materials, and in the ability to work intensively during longer periods of time. The amount of voluntary reading done can be measured. Children's understandings and their ability to state them are testimony as to the effectiveness of the work done. Their expressions of attitudes and opinions offer concrete evidence of results. The culminating activities of a unit should require organization and using the information acquired in new ways.

Informal tests and other tests that are based on the particular materials in use will furnish additional evidence as to the effec-

tiveness of the work done, and standardized tests will tell how the achievements of a particular group compare with those of other pupils throughout the country.

Some questions that the teacher may ask herself in regard to her teaching are:

1. Do I build up sufficient background for understanding the materials to be read?
2. Do I encourage working up to capacity on the part of *all* children?
3. Do I relate the new materials to the children's past experiences and knowledge?
4. Do I use the pictures, maps, charts, and tables in the text in developing readiness for reading?
5. Do I use globes, objects, supplementary books and pictures, demonstrations, experiments, and talks by visitors?
6. Do I introduce new words orally and encourage their use before they are encountered in print?
7. Do I make the presentation of a unit or section of material so interesting that the children *want* to read it?
8. Do I aid children in stating a worthwhile purpose for reading?
9. Do I encourage different methods of reading different materials and help the children to know *when* to use each method?
10. Do I succeed in stimulating interest in supplementary reading?
11. Do I encourage worth-while activities of many types?
12. Do I aid children in evaluating their own work?

Nothing is more beneficial to the children than evaluating their own work. After giving help and guidance in making evaluations, pupils should be encouraged in carrying on this activity independently. A list of questions for such use might be worked out co-operatively. It is well to start with one or



# Improving Racial Attitudes Through Children's Books

DOROTHY SHEPARD MANLEY<sup>1</sup>

In recent years there has been a great increase in the production of books for children, particularly in the areas of science, the useful arts, social science, vocations (non-fiction and fiction), and the stories, biographies, and factual accounts of other nations and races, presented for the most part with great fidelity, sympathy, and understanding. This production is a result of the increased awareness of children's activities and interests, and is a direct response to their questions concerning the immediate world about them, and the peoples of this and of foreign lands.

Unfortunately, in those written about Negro Americans, the Negro is set apart as a vastly different and objectionable creature. These books include certain stereotyped elements, whether they deal with the Negro in slavery and Reconstruction days or the present. The adult Negro is portrayed in menial capacity, if he works at all. The children play with white children, but have to serve as the object of any joke and must remember to stay in their places for "Miss Ann" is always the leader who must be regarded with awe. The characters are ridiculed in story and illustrations. These stereotyped beliefs are usually included: that Negroes are shiftless; that they are superstitious, yet deeply religious; that they are improvident, incapable of learning, and addicted to lying and stealing. Some exaggerated form of what the author considers dialect is the usual medium of expression. The terms of abuse "nigger," "pickaninny," "coon," "darky," are used to refer to characters whose names are themselves the most ludicrous imaginable.

Since there have been relatively few books on the Negro for children, some of these mediocre books are recent publications, written in response to the requests for books about Negroes to be used by children here and in other countries. Are we not justified in asking why such unrepresentative books are written in today's world when all forces are uniting to promote greater understanding among the races of mankind? Why should anyone want to put such inaccurate conceptions of people in the hands of children whose minds are in a state of formative growth, whose attitudes and conceptions are necessarily drawn from what they read and hear?

Books which portray the Negro as religious, good-hearted and good-natured, but inferior because of his superstition, irresponsibility, and laziness contribute nothing toward the building of a better world. On the contrary, they retard its development by perpetuating false ideas. These books will leave the citizens of tomorrow unprepared to help solve inter-ethnic problems because their understanding of the Negro will have been warped by such reading in childhood. The future depends more directly on the knowledge and understanding of the people of today than on those of the past.

Negroes object to these books because they give an untrue picture of the real nature of the people involved. Negroes are certainly no more ashamed of their past and the individuals of that period than the average white is of his part in that past—they have reason to be

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less so. Nor are they more ashamed of some of the individuals of the race today, whose standards are unlike their own, than the white man is of those in his race. Increasingly Negroes can understand the forces which made some of these individuals what they happen to be. Of these, pressures caused by lack of understanding and fear are foremost.

Negroes feel that features of a book about Negroes which arouse discomfort, shame, and resentment in Negroes and at the same time confirm in the minds of white readers some general but unjustified notion of the inferiority of Negroes, are positively harmful, and should be omitted. If the purpose of a book is to promote real understanding and good-will, whenever such features are evident, it has not been achieved and the book is valueless.

Many Negro mothers and teachers are making valiant efforts to rear Negro children with respect for themselves. Likewise, members of other races are attempting to foster wholesome attitudes in their children toward Negro children. Yet how is this possible when, beginning in the home, the young child reads of, if he does not hear of, the Negro as a "nigger". Books which carry these expressions defeat all efforts to delete these words from vocabularies.

It is generally known to historians of American English, but obviously not to many writers, that even the best dialect used in books often does not represent any language that has ever been actually spoken. Most of it is mutilated English, a language called eye dialect, which is only misspelling intended to represent a pronunciation. The use of dialect then, as an authentic feature, is deservedly questionable.

It is with real regret that we note books with these objectionable features on lists prepared for international use, sponsored by highly reputable organizations and some writ-

ten by authors of note. The sponsorship of the already well criticized<sup>2</sup> Ritter's *Parasols is for Ladies*, selected by the Junior Literary Guild, has caused thinking people to be somewhat skeptical of this organization's standards for selection. Phyllis Fenner, in her enthusiastic informal book, *Our Library*, refers to Negro children in her Long Island school as "pickaninnies." Greatly exaggerated pictures illustrate the one-sided references to Negroes in the *Story of the Mississippi*, a factual account, written by Marshall McClintock and illustrated by C. H. DeWitt.

Criticisms expressed herein do not arise from the natural resentment which one normally experiences at seeing or reading disparaging statements about himself, but grow out of a knowledge of the value and ultimate influence of the impressions gained from reading such material, especially in childhood. One of education's basic concepts, that reading exerts a profound influence on the growth of the individual mind and upon the shaping of attitudes and beliefs, attests the fact that the attitude expressed in this article is not unique. Recognition of its importance in Negro-white relationships is expressed by a white scholar, Miss Louise Rosenblatt,<sup>3</sup> who states that:

"Books may help fix attitudes toward different races; consider the influence, for instance, of the fact that the child usually encounters the Negro presented as an object for laughter or at best as a kind of prize domestic animal, as in so many novels of the South purporting to show the kindness of masters to servants. The repeated impact of such images bodied forth in poems, novels, plays, and biographies surely adds something to the complex pressures acting on the individual and leading him to crystallize his sense of the

<sup>2</sup>Charlemae Rollins, "Children's Books on the Negro: To Help Build a Better World." *Elementary English Review*, October, 1943, p. 220.

<sup>3</sup>Louise M. Rosenblatt, *Literature as Exploration*. New York: Appleton-Century, 1938, p. 227.

world about him and his sense of the appropriate attitudes to assume toward it."

Although the general concept has long been established, scientific proof though experimental investigation is a recent, but none the less significant, development. Recognition of the need for the use of suitable material in the formation of desirable attitudes toward Negroes has resulted in a scientific study in this area. This study<sup>4</sup> of Negro-white attitudes is believed to be the first of its kind.

Miss Jackson shares the belief of many persons interested in improving human relations that the southern white is hostile to the Negro largely because he knows only the stereotyped servant. She believes further that reading might correct this attitude provided it portrayed the Negro as a normal human being not unlike the white man. To prove this hypothesis, Miss Jackson, through a controlled reading experiment, measured the attitudes of white children in Atlanta, Georgia, toward Negro children before and after the reading

of material dealing with Negro children, to detect the influence of this reading upon them. Miss Jackson states that:

"In view of the fact that a change in attitude was produced by reading in a specific situation, librarians might be urged to give more representation to fiction in which the Negro is presented in a natural and sympathetic light. Publishers should be encouraged to make available more stories of this type suitable for children. An effort should be made to publicize such material to children and to adults.<sup>5</sup>

These conclusions are significant, not only to librarians and publishers, but also to those who write for children. If these writers have any real desire to write books that may be regarded as noteworthy contributions to children's literature and toward the development of real sympathetic understanding in the field of inter-ethnic relations they will examine and incorporate into their thinking the criteria set up by Miss Jackson and Mrs. Rollins.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 54.

<sup>6</sup> Charlemae Rollins, *We Build Together*. Chicago: National Council of Teachers of English, 1940, p. 219-222.

<sup>4</sup> Evalene P. Jackson, "Effects of Reading Upon Attitudes Toward the Negro Race." *Library Quarterly*, January, 1944, pp. 47-54.

## WE ALL HAD A HAND IN IT

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Changes are evident in teaching. Classrooms are laboratories for writing or club rooms where real problems are attacked and solved. Through working together teachers have learned to understand each other better and are better informed than they were about the work preceding and following their own. Proper use of the course of study demands teacher planning for each individual group and student. The plan allows for great

elasticity; it provides for the quick and the slow learner; for the mental and the motor type; for the aggressive and the indifferent boy or girl. The work begins with the individual and provides progressive training designed to lead the student to his highest personal attainment through important contribution first to his own group and then to the kind of democratic living the world is struggling to preserve.

# Verse Speaking for Speech Improvement

MARY LU HARVEY<sup>1</sup>

The kindergarten and first grade teachers find that many children in their groups of five-, six-, and seven-year-olds have speech defects. Lispings, baby talking, stammering, foreign accent, and inaccuracy of enunciation all present problems. The early elementary teachers have as a major responsibility the inculcation of good speech habits. They must develop in the little child habits of clear enunciation, correct pronunciation, and volume.

There were many children with speech defects in my first grade group at Howard School. There were, for example, two sets of twins. Each set talked, to me, an unknown language between themselves. There were several lispers, two stammerers, a Negro child with characteristic speech difficulties, and many who through habit enunciated poorly. In addition, there were many timid children whose personalities retarded good speech. The problem was to help these children improve their speech, without neglecting those who had already developed satisfactory speech habits.

After numerous unsuccessful attempts to solve my problem by the traditional methods of enunciation and pronunciation drills, I abandoned these for exercises in group speaking of nursery rhymes and simple verse. The results achieved by this method were of such character as to warrant some confidence in concert verse speaking as a method of speech improvement in the early elementary grades.

As to materials, simple nursery rhymes or short verses, especially those which repeat a

certain sound, provide suitable exercises. When teaching the verse, my own method is to say it for the children as expressively and distinctly as possible, emphasizing the sound I wish to be learned or corrected. I somewhat exaggerate the movements of my lips and mouth, also the sounds, so that the children can see how the sounds are formed and hear clearly each one. Perhaps the next day I repeat that verse and another. This process is continued until we have quite a repertoire. When I am sure the children know the poem and when I see them forming the words correctly with their lips, I invite them to say it aloud with me.

When the children can repeat the verse independently it is time for voice improvement exercises. We begin by speaking the verse in a high voice, then in a low voice; in loud tones and in soft tones. The children listen for the best effects. A rhyme suggesting the use of variety of pitch and volume is the familiar

"Pussy Cat! Pussy Cat! Where have you been?"

"I've been to London to look at the Queen."

"Pussy Cat! Pussy Cat! What did you there?"

"I frightened a little mouse under a chair."

The questions are quite loud, beginning with a medium low pitch and raising the voice toward the end. The children are taught to use a high soft voice (kitten like) in speaking the lines spoken by the cat.

At first, all groups have a tendency to monotone and unvaried rate in speaking verse. Therefore, it seems to me to be a good plan to

<sup>1</sup>A teacher in the Howard School, Grand Island, Neb.



select exercises requiring variation in pitch, volume, and rate. When children become very familiar with a verse they are inclined to speak it too rapidly and to slight important sounds, and rhythm must therefore be emphasized.

After the verse is learned and expression seems satisfactory, small groups or individuals may take a part or line as a solo. This affords group and individual practice and tests the child who has a special difficulty. It also enables the teacher to discover difficulties and help correct them.

I do not, of course, strive for a polished reading performance, but only for enough finish that the children will enjoy the exercise and take pride in better speech.

I encountered a difficult problem in trying to help the aforementioned twins. Both sets

spoke so that it was nearly impossible to understand anything they said. The children of the group were not much help as they quickly grasped the twins' peculiar languages and did not demand good speech from them in ordinary conversation. Verse speaking became the incentive to improve. I would often have them speak the refrain, insisting that it be done distinctly. The group became more critical and demanded better enunciation and pronunciation in this situation. Gradually there was, I am sure, a carry-over into conversation.

This use of verse-speaking accustoms the timid child to hearing his own voice and he becomes less reticent in speaking in a clear voice in normal conversation. It improves the voice of the child who speaks too loudly, too softly, hoarsely, or shrilly and it promotes tonal variety.

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### READING SOCIAL STUDIES MATERIALS

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two points and gradually add to the list which might eventually include the following:

1. Can I pick out the most important ideas from what I read?
2. Can I tell why they are important?
3. Can I find information about these ideas in other books and materials?
4. Can I use an index to help me find the information quickly?
5. Can I help myself in learning how to pronounce new words and in learning what they mean?
6. Do I understand better when I reread?
7. Can I get information from maps and globes?
8. Do I try to read the stories that pictures tell?
9. Do I read different kinds of materials in different ways?
10. Am I improving in my ability to state understandings?

Teachers who study their pupils and work with them consistently in an effort to help them become better readers are bound to get results. The amount of improvement will vary with individuals; indeed, the better the teaching the greater this variation will be. The goal should not be a stated amount of improvement but a group in which each child is doing the best work that he is capable of doing.

# The Educational Scene

Book Week, 1944, which comes November 12-18, promises to be international in scope. Indications are that England, Brazil, the Soviet Union, Nicaragua, Mexico, and Bombay, India will celebrate the occasion with children's book exhibits and the colorful poster which Children's Book Week, 62 West 45th Street, New York 19, New York has prepared. The slogan will be "United through Books."

In addition to the full-color poster, which sells for twenty-five cents, Children's Book Week will distribute free a manual giving a short history of Book Week, suggestions of activities which can be planned and lists of posters, book marks, and aids for the promotion of children's books. Teachers, librarians, and parent-teacher groups are urged to form local Book Week committees.

Incidentally, this year is the 200th anniversary of the publication of the Little Pretty Pocketbooks by John Newbery. A facsimile edition of this book may be secured for display purposes from Book Week headquarters at \$1.00 per copy.

The Junior Literary Guild selections for November are: for boys and girls, 6, 7, and 8 years of age, *Angelo, The Naughty One*, by Helen Garrett, Viking, \$2.00; for boys and girls, 9, 10, and 11 years of age, *Rabbit Hill*, by Robert Lawson, Viking, \$2.00; for older girls, 12 to 16 years of age, *The Girl Without A Country*, by Martha Lee Poston, Thomas Nelson, \$2.00; and for older boys, 12 to 16 years of age, *Wilderness Champion: The Story of A Great Hound*, by Joseph Wharton Lippincott, J. B. Lippincott, \$2.00.

The discussion of the important fall children's books, announced for November, will appear next month.

Cecil Lester Jones, President of the Association of the Junior Leagues of America, Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York 22, announces that a new series of thirteen fifteen-

minute dramatic adaptations of books for children nine to twelve years old entitled "Books Bring Adventure" is now available for sustaining programs at a nominal cost to schools and other educational organizations.

The Evansville, Indiana Committee on English has just published a supplement to its 1943 *Bulletin of Recommendations to English Teachers*. It contains several pages of particular interest to teachers in the primary and intermediate grades. Available for twenty cents from the Office of the Public Schools, Evansville 8, Indiana.

The *Junior Review Catalogue of the Best Children's Books of Recent Years* is a new list compiled by *Junior Reviewers*, the monthly publication reviewing the new books for children. The list, which sells for fifty cents a copy, is obtainable at *Junior Reviewers*, 241 Greenwood Street, Newton Center 59, Mass.

The National Geographic Society is again distributing its popular *Geographic School Bulletin* from its general headquarters in Washington, D. C. A charge of twenty-five cents is made for postage and mailing expense.

A suggested bibliography for junior and senior high school English classes which will be of interest to teachers in the upper grades of the elementary school deals with the subject of *The Literature of Democracy*. It is published by the Michigan Secondary Curriculum Study and the Michigan State Library, Lansing, Michigan.

"We Hold These Truths," a mimeographed pamphlet published by the Chicago Public Library Employees Union (C.I.O.) contains suggestions concerning recent books for adults and children on leading democratic themes, chiefly intercultural unity. Free . . . The National Foundation for Education in American Citizenship and the Public Affairs Committee, Inc., has just issued a new pamphlet, *Our Constitutional Freedoms*, by Robert E. Cushman (\$1.10).

# Review and Criticism

[Brief reviews in this issue are by Dorothy E. Smith, Jean Gardiner Smith, Bernadine Schmidt, Helen C. Bough, and Ivah Green. Unsigned annotations are by the editor.]

## FOR TEACHERS

A *Basic Book Collection for Elementary Grades*. Compiled by a Joint Committee of the American Library Association, National Education Association, and National Council of Teachers of English, Gretchen Westervelt, Chairman. American Library Association, \$2.00.

In format, classification, and subject headings this volume follows the pattern set by the *Children's Catalog* (Wilson, 1914). Quoting from the introduction, "The committee has attempted to prepare a list of books suited for curricular purposes and for recreational reading. The list includes books for the child who reads easily, for the child who finds some difficulty in reading, for the child who likes to read books."

A children's library that had all the books on this list—approximately 1200—would have a good, workable basic collection. There would be something that would appeal to any child who might want to read, or who might be lured to read. It is no ivory tower list of books that all good librarians wish that all children would read. It meets the children—readers and potential readers—on their own level. There are stepping-stones as well as the cream of the crop. In the hands of a wise librarian, teacher, or parent it should be exceedingly useful. The committee is to be congratulated on its realistic approach to the question of children's reading. D. E. S.

*Subject Index to Books for Intermediate Grades. First Supplement*. Compiled by Eloise Rue. American Library Association, \$2.50.

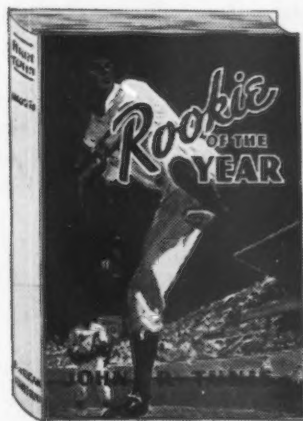
This supplement to the Subject Index to Books for Intermediate Grades, which was published in 1940, will be especially valuable to elementary and junior high school librarians since it suggests books that will correlate with new trends in curricula such as Latin America, American Life, Aviation, and Radio. In no way does it supersede the original

Subject Index. The list is arranged alphabetically by author, and includes author, title, publisher, date, price, series, grade-span, and Dewey Decimal Classification number. There is also a list of titles that have been revised or replaced by others since 1940, and a third list of books now available to schools in the Cadmus edition. The headings are well chosen and popularly expressed in terms familiar to a grade school child. The book should be a boon to teacher-librarians. Miss Rue deserves a vote of thanks for keeping it simple, understandable, workable. D. E. S.

## FOR CHILDREN

*Yea! Wildcats!* By John R. Tunis. Harcourt, \$2.00.

Again John Tunis has written an exciting sports story that also has real social significance. Don Henderson, coach of a high-school basket-ball team in a small town in Indiana, keeps his integrity in spite of the Boosters' Club, the Chamber of Commerce,



From *Rookie of the Year* (Harcourt, Brace)

organized gambling and J. Frank Shaw, the large Toad in a small puddle, who runs the town. Hypocrisy, petty politics, and race prejudice are dealt with in terms that young people can understand. John Tunis tells his tales with fine faith in the youth of the nation.

D. E. S.

*Love's Enchantment.* By Helen Ferris. Illustrated by Vera Bock. Doubleday, \$2.50.

From old ballads and new Miss Ferris has read to adolescent girls, and *Love's Enchantment* is the result. Their own choices of young love, princes, beggars, and adventure, stemming chiefly from the medieval, are handsomely decorated by figure and full page illustration by Vera Bock. The whole is an invitation to enjoyment.

H. C. B.

*Willie's Walk to Grandmama.* By Margaret Wise Brown and Rockbridge Campbell. Illustrated by Lucienne Bloch. Scott, \$1.25.

At the risk of being termed literal-minded, we think there are enough children with a tendency to rove without having it presented so attractively. If you were not yet six and lived in the city, would your Grandmother in the country telephone to you and tell you to walk through the country, all by yourself, following your nose, until you came to her house which you would recognize by finding her inside? We thought not. Fantasy and imagination are one thing. This, we think, is dangerous make-believe.

D. E. S.

*Puritan Adventure.* Written and illustrated by Lois Lenski. A Stokes book. Lippincott, \$2.00.

To a strict Puritan town of the Massachusetts Bay Colony comes young Aunt Charity with her memories of the traditions and merry making of Old England. She brings



From *Puritan Adventure* (Lippincott)

the joy of Christmas and Shrovetide and May Day to the drab lives of the children. The story has many incidents which will add to an understanding of the rigorous New England life. Grades 5 - 8.

J. G. S.

*Riders of the Gabilans.* By Graham M. Dean. Illustrated by Wesley Dennis. Viking, \$2.00.

A well-knit story of a cattle ranch in the San Joaquin Valley region of California. Jimmie Burgess rides the range, helps with the branding, wins trophies in the rodeos, and helps to capture cattle rustlers. Good characterization and excellent illustrations further the sense of authenticity of the tale.

D. E. S.

*Angelo the Naughty One.* By Helen Garrett. Illustrated by Leo Politi. Viking, \$2.00.

Angelo, afraid of water, ran away so that he wouldn't have to take a bath before going to his sister's wedding in a little Mexican vil-



From *Angelo the Naughty One* (Viking)

lage. By successive stages he was Angelo the Naughty One, Angelo the Tiger, and finally Angelo the Brave One, Pride of the Family! Large type, a merry story, and gay, colorful pictures make this a book of many uses.

D. E. S.

*Children's Picture Cook Book.* By Margaret Gossett. Illustrated by Elizabeth Dauber. William R. Scott, Inc., \$1.50.

Simple colorful directions giving equipment, materials, procedure, each step illustrated, and finished product. Delightful, fascinating, and practical for the 8 - 11 year old.

H. C. B.

*The Pageant of Chinese History.* By Elizabeth Seeger. Second Edition. Longmans Green, \$3.00.

The new edition of this well-known history of China for young people includes a chapter on "The Republic" to bring the story up to date.

*The Great Quillow.* By James Thurber. Illustrated by Doris Lee. Harcourt, \$2.50.

The great Quillow was a toy-maker, only five feet tall, with white hair that stood up like a dandelion. But small and amusing to



look at as he was, he had imagination which he used to rid the town of the terrifying giant, Hunder. This modern fairy tale with the folk-lore flavor is printed in large, clear type, and most satisfactorily illustrated by Doris Lee. It is the sort of story little folks will enjoy hearing read to them even before they can read it for themselves. D. E. S.

*Fox Fire.* By Gertrude Robinson. Illustrated by Woodi Ishmael. Dutton, \$2.00.

The story of teen-aged Paul and Hepsy, two Puritan children who shared excitement and hard work as pioneers in Rhode Island. For the junior high school. B. G. S.

*Saturday Flight.* By Ethel Wright. Illustrated by Richard Rose. W. R. Scott, \$1.00.

A picture book account of an airplane ride. For the nursery school and kindergarten. Unfortunately, the spiral binding means it will not stand up under hard use, nor can it be rebound. J. G. S.

*Muggins.* By Bianca Bradbury. Illustrated by Diana Thorne. Houghton Mifflin, \$0.85.

A jet black baby kitten named Muggins explores window-shades, coal piles, and cream pitchers, with disastrous results. How he satisfied his curiosity and learned to be a good little kitten ever after makes a delightful story to read to nursery and kindergarten children. Second and third grade youngsters will want to read it themselves. B. G. S.

*Rabbit Hill.* By Robert Lawson. Illustrated by the author. Viking, \$2.00.

Great was the excitement on Rabbit Hill when Little Georgie tumbled into the Rabbit

burrow shouting, "New Folks coming in the Big House!" How the New Folks fulfilled the high hopes of all the Small Animals makes a story that is characterized by kindness, humor, and understanding. A distinguished book with a distinguished format. We dare to predict that it is one of those rare books like *Dr. Dolittle* and *When We Were Very Young*—a classic before the printer's ink is dry. D. E. S.

*Here Comes Daddy.* By Winifred Milius. Scott, \$1.25.

While Peter and his cat, Finnegan, wait for daddy to come home they see the different kinds of vehicles that are common on the streets—even including a three-wheeled bicycle. With that one exception all the experiences are within a toddler's ken, and he would enjoy the brightly colored pictures. D. E. S.

*Rocky Mountain Ranger.* By William Marshall Rush. Longmans, Green, \$2.00.

Young Kirk Douglas makes good in his ambition to become a member of the United States Forest Service. His exciting adventures occur in the setting of the Rockies in Montana, near Yellowstone Park. For age 10 and older.

*Georgie.* By Robert Bright. Doubleday, \$1.25.

Never has there been a more lovable ghost than Georgie who creaked the stairs and squeaked the door every night. Then the family knew it was time to go to bed; Herman the cat knew it was time to prowl; and Miss Oliver, the owl, knew it was time to wake up and say "Whoo-oo-oo!" But one day the loose board on the stairs was pounded and the hinges of the door were oiled, and Georgie couldn't make a sound so he just sat up in the attic and moped. His efforts to find another house to haunt were unsuccessful, and he spent a cold winter in the cow barn until rain and snow did something to the board and the hinge, and Georgie returned home. The illustrations are very jolly. The story could be used as a Hallowe'en tale for small children. For reading aloud, or to be read by Grades 2 - 3. J. G. S.



From *Rabbit Hill* (Viking)

*A Ring and a Riddle.* By I. I. Marshak (M. Ilin, pseud.) and E. A. Segal. Translated by Beatrice Kinkead. Illustrated by Vera Brock. Lippincott, \$2.00.

A pleasant fairy tale about Ivan who inherited only a rusty axe and went off to seek his fortune. A beautiful maiden gave him a ring which he was always to follow as it rolled along the ground, and a horn on which to blow if ever he needed help. In turn, he discovered a saw which could cut its way through forests, a club which drove piles for a bridge, a trowel which made the way for a river, a crystal apple which glowed like fire, seven-league boots, and a winged ship. All of these are ingredients for a successful fairy tale, and had the authors been content to end with the ring, it would have been a better story. The riddle consists of an interpretation in terms of factual material. The magic ring? That is the compass. The talking horn? The radio. Now any child can tell you that they are not one and the same—that no compass rolls merrily before you to lead the way, that no radio is a horn into which you can shout for immediate help; and certainly no railroad train offers the thrilling independence of your own seven-league boots. There is a completely unscientific confusion in the comparisons. Children, who are more discriminating than scientists, know that there is the world of faery and the world of reality; they accept them both and marvel at them both, but they do not stir them into the same brew. The miracles of science do not need a fairy tale to

point their wonder; and it is to be hoped that the children who love fairy tales will have the wisdom to close the book when they have read the story of the ring. For grades 5-7.

J. G. S.

*I Had a Penny.* By Audrey Chalmers. Illustrated by the author. Viking, \$1.00.

Little girls especially will enjoy this story-picture book about another little girl who had a red pocket-book with a penny in it—a penny that was used to buy a green lollipop.

D. E. S.

*Three in the Jungle.* By Karena Shields. Illustrated by Harold Peterson. Harcourt, Brace, \$2.00.

Three American, English, and Mayan boys visit the jungles of Central America and meet jaguars, alligators, and jungle ants. For junior high readers.

B. G. S.

*The Bountiful Cow.* By Helen Manley Czaja. Pictures by Michael Czaja. Holt, \$1.50.

Both illustrations and text are the forced sort of humor which adults mistakenly interpret as childlike. The emphasis on the name of the cow—Bugeye—because her eyes look like bugs leads one to wonder what kind of insects inhabit the Pennsylvania farm yards. Bugeye is afraid of growing up, but loses her fear when her calf is born and she becomes a bountiful cow. The story lacks unity. Not recommended for purchase.

J. G. S.

*The Hundred Dresses.* By Eleanor Estes. Illustrated by Louis Slobodkin. Harcourt, \$2.50.

Wanda Petronski wore the same faded blue dress to school every day, but stoutly maintained that she had "a hundred dresses all lined up in my closet." She had, too! but not the sort that her thoughtlessly cruel classmates thought she meant. The simple truth of the lovely story gives it lasting value. Little girls will long remember it.

D. E. S.



From *A Ring and A Riddle* (Lippincott)

*In the Forest.* By Marie Hall Ets. Illustrated by the author. Viking, \$1.00.

When a small boy went for a walk in the forest he found himself heading a parade of most amazing animals that are sure to delight



From *In the Forest* (Viking)

any small child. Full-page black and white illustrations on every page—with just a line or two of text. D. E. S.

*Living Together at Home and at School.* By Cutright, Charters, and Clark. Illustrated by Kate Seredy. Macmillan, \$1.20.

For city school children, an excellent tie-up of various aspects of living, written to hold a first-grader's interest. It emphasizes the need for work; the importance of all kinds of work; and interdependence between workers. Science and health teachings are simple but effective. Good suggestions in "Talk Together" and "Things to Do." A poem and song accompany each chapter. Kate Seredy's charming black and white illustrations adorn each story page. I. G.

*Tomahawk: Fighting Horse of the Old West.* By Thomas C. Hinkle. Morrow, \$2.00.

The young horse Tomahawk has one breathless adventure after another as he fights now his human enemies, the rustlers, then his foes in the world of nature. For lovers of animal stories, ages 9 - 12.

*Hooker's Holiday.* Written and illustrated by Wilfrid S. Bronson. Harcourt, Brace, \$1.75.

Hooker, a monkey being studied to discover why monkeys and people are so much alike, escapes from his cage and leads his would-be captors an exciting chase through museum and school cafeteria. Monkeys,

baboons, apes, and chimpanzees are cleverly depicted. Full-page, black and white illustrations filled with drollery and animation make this a book children will delight to pore over, for the richness of detail and cunning facial expressions of both men and monkeys. I. G.

*Big Brownie.* By Rutherford Montgomery. Illustrated by Jacob Landau. Holt, \$2.00.

Big Brownie was a Kodiak bear cub who nearly lost his life when the Miller Sheep Company ordered that all bears be killed in order to protect their sheep. Ruth Miller and her father who lived in Happy Valley on Kodiak Island, knew that only occasionally was a brown bear a killer. In a nicely balanced story Mr. Montgomery shows how sheepmen and bears could live peaceably on the Island. D. E. S.

*Little Jonathan.* By Miriam E. Mason. Illustrated by George and Doris Hauman. Macmillan, \$1.25.

This little boy could never do interesting and important things like his twelve brothers and sisters, because he was "too little to do



From *Little Jonathan* (Macmillan)

this," and "too young to do that," but he knew that "nothing lasts forever." And big brothers and sisters were surprised when Jonathan was invited to dinner by the steamboat captain and given a lucky twenty-five cent piece. For second to fifth grades children. B. G. S.

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